



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

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**Governor Rell Encourages Families to Consider  
Adopting a Child in State Foster Care**  
*November Is National Adoption Month*

Governor M. Jodi Rell said today that National Adoption Month in November is a good opportunity for the State to draw attention to the need to find families for children in foster care who need one.

Governor Rell said the need for new adoptive families is great, and so are the rewards for people who adopt. The state Department of Children and Families (DCF) finalizes about 500 adoptions a year.

“Every child deserves a permanent, loving family,” Governor Rell said. “People who adopt are doing something very special – and while they are giving a great deal of themselves, they get back even more in return.”

Governor Rell has made improving adoptions with DCF children a high priority since coming to office in 2004. In the Governor’s first legislative session in 2005, she proposed and won passage for improvements to make it more attractive for foster parents to adopt the children in their care. The improvements included increasing financial support, making adopted children eligible for DCF college assistance program, and increasing support for families after they adopt if their children experience behavior or emotional problems.

As a result of these and other changes, the percentage of children adopted in a timely manner has increased significantly. Compared to the first quarter of 2004, the percentage of children adopted within 24 months more than tripled in the second quarter of 2006. In five of the last six quarters, more than 30 percent of the children adopted had their adoptions finalized in two years or less. In four of the last six quarters, the DCF met the 32 percent goal set by a federal court monitor. In State Fiscal Year 2006, 498 adoptions were finalized and 308 subsidized guardianships granted for a total of 806 new permanent homes.

Earlier this month, Governor Rell joined Virginia Governor Tim Kaines in signing a letter to all the other Governors asking them to participate in National Adoption Day activities on

November 18. The National Adoption Day Coalition asked Governor Rell to sign the letter in recognition of the priority her administration has placed on improving adoptions in Connecticut.

In November, the Department will engage in a number of activities to recruit prospective adoptive families, to thank and recognize families who have adopted, and to bolster public awareness of adoption, including:

- The 2006 fourth annual Heart Gallery, featuring photographs of 40 children waiting to be adopted, will be displayed at the Artist's Collective in Hartford. The opening is November 15;
- A statewide adoption recognition dinner for families who have adopted. Invitations have gone to about 3,000 families for the event in Cromwell November 29;
- On November 3, as part of the Department's "Queen Esther Project", the First Hispanic Baptist Church in New London is having an adoption fair for approximately 50 families who belong to faith-based organizations in the New London area;
- The Hartford DCF office is having an appreciation dinner for adoptive families; and
- DCF is honoring Bridgeport area probate judges for their commitment and contribution toward adoptions on November 15.

To adopt a child from the Department, a family must become licensed. Licensing takes three to four months and includes a 10-week training program, a home-study and background checks. Most families who adopt will receive a subsidy that ranges from \$9,066 to \$ 10,011 per year, depending on the age of the child. The subsidy for children with complex medical needs is \$16,523 per year. Children who are adopted also receive medical benefits.

For information or to learn more about becoming an adoptive parent, call 1-888-KID-HERO.